

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation. In an administration driven by market forces and competition, this trend is especially disturbing to me.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard.

It is just this kind of irresponsible action by media giants that will ultimately result in reducing our ability to regulate in the public interest. Satellite radio and webcasting are only the beginning of new technologies that will strive to return the elements of local control and competition to the populace. Failure to regulate in the public interest can only lead to losing the interest of the public.

Thank you.